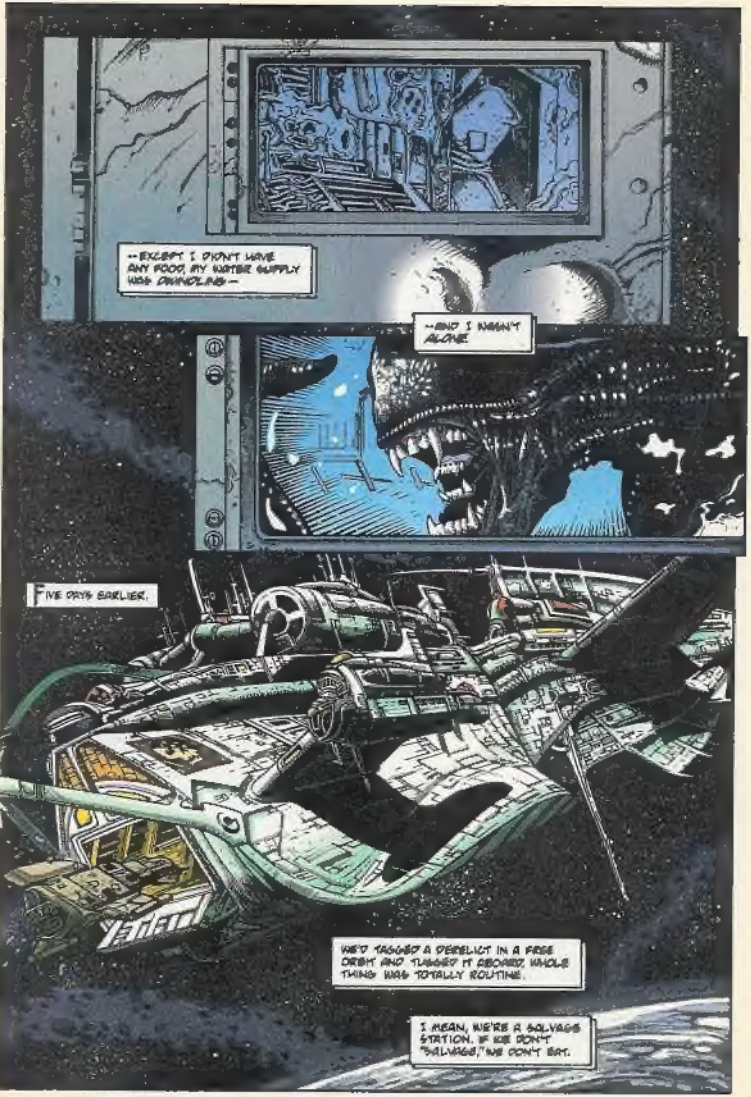
ALIENS
LUCKY
THE THING IN RACINE HAD IT IN FOR ME FROM THE START. MY LAST EVALUATION WAS A DISASTER. HE SAID I WAS UNETHICAL, WEAK-- "MORALLY SUSPECT."
HE WAS ALWAYS SO DAMN CLINICAL.
C'MON, C'MON, YOU CAN GET IN CLOSER THAN THAT...
YEAH... THAT'S M--
IN FACT, RACINE WOULD HAVE HAD MY ASS UP ON CHARGES JUST FOR BEING IN THIS RESTRICTED AREA--
--IF HE HADN'T BEEN TAKEN BY THOSE DAMN THINGS.
SEC CAM 327
"YES, SIR, OFFICER RACINE. NO, SIR, OFFICER RACINE. MY APOLOGIES, OFFICER RACINE--"
I MIGHT BE "MORALLY SUSPECT," BUT YOU'RE TWO INCHES FROM DEAD--
--AND I'M STILL HERE.
FUNNY. IN A LOT OF WAYS, THESE LAST FEW DAYS WOULD HAVE BEEN RATHER PEACEFUL--


--EXCEPT I DIDN'T HAVE ANY FOOD, MY WATER SUPPLY WAS DWINDLING--
--AND I WASN'T ALONE.
FIVE DAYS EARLIER.
WE'D TAGGED A DERELICT IN A FREE ORBIT AND TURNED IT ABOARD. WHOLE THING WAS TOTALLY ROUTINE.
I MEAN, WE'RE A SALVAGE STATION. IF WE DON'T "SALVAGE," WE DON'T EAT.

BUT SOMETHING WAS WRONG. I MEAN, I KNOW THE REGULATIONS, THAT FREELIFT SHOULD HAVE BEEN SUBJECTED TO A FULL LIFE-FORM CHECK BEFORE IT WAS CHECKED!
YOU DON'T WANT TO RUN THE SCANS?
FORGET IT—THE SHIP'S MINE! I'LL DO THE FIRST WALK-THROUGH AND CALL YOUR TEAM WHEN I'M DONE.
JUST REMEMBER, WE BET 25% OF THE TAKE, AND I EXPECT AN HONEST COUNT THIS TIME, KANGRO.
PROBLEM #1: THE SCANS WOULD HAVE TAKEN SIX HOURS, AND WE WERE IN A HURRY, AS USUAL.
LOCK DOWN ...COMPLETE...
JUST YOUR CREW'S GETTING GREEDY.
YOU GET 75% OF ALL THE FREE FLOAT YOU CAN POCKET, AND WE'RE GREEDY?!
IF THE CORPORATION EVER FOUND OUT ABOUT YOUR LITTLE SCAVENGING "FREELIFTS," YOU'D FIND YOURSELF WALKING HOME FROM HERE.
scanize
BESIDES, WE DID RUN A VISUAL. EVERY HATCH ON THE FREELIFT HAD BEEN BLOWN, EXPOSING ITS GUTS TO SPACE. LAST TIME I CHECKED, LIFE MIGHT SUPPOSED TO EXIST IN A VACUUM.
BESIDES, IF IT KNOWN SOMETHING WAS WRONG ON THAT FREELIFT, DO YOU REALLY THINK I WOULD HAVE BEEN THE FIRST ONE TO GO ABOARD?
SHIT! THE HELL...
IT'S A LITTLE PECULIARITY OF MINE. I'M A COMPLETE COWARD!
SOMEONE MUST HAVE LEFT THE COM-LINK OPEN. ANOTHER FLAGRANT VIOLATION OF FIRST OFFICER RACINE'S PROTOCOL.
AHHH...
WHEN THE FIRST SCREAMS CAME OVER MY HELMET'S SPEAKERS, I KNEW WE HAD A PROBLEM.

THEY WANTED ABOARD THE STATION. I WAS ON THE DERELICT. IT'S PROBABLY WHAT SAVED ME.
SOME MIGHT CALL THAT LUCK.
THEN I SAW ONE OF THOSE THINGS.
AIRLOCK
MY GOD!
THEY MOVED THROUGH THE STATION LIKE LOCUSTS-- MUST HAVE BEEN DOZENS OF THEM--
OH GOD OH GOD--
THEY WERE INSIDE BEFORE THE OFFICERS COULD EVEN BEGIN A RESPONSE.
GET YOUR ASS IN HERE--
EXCEPT FOR OUR VALIANT FIRST OFFICER,
R--RACINE?
MY GOD. WHAT IN THE HELL HAVE YOU DONE?

SO FAR, THEY'RE CONFINED TO THE LOWER DECK, BUT THEY'LL SPREAD THROUGH THE ENTIRE STATION IF THEY'RE NOT STOPPED!
WE'VE GOT TO SCALE THEM OFF-SHIP!
THE ONLY THING THAT NEEDS TO BE "OFF-SHIP" IS US. WE'VE GOT TO GET TO A LIFE-POD AND EJECT.
THAT'S ABOUT WHAT I EXPECTED FROM YOU, KANAKO.
BUT AS LONG AS I'M FIRST OFFICER, THIS STATION'S NOT GOING TO FAIL, UNDERSTAND?
YES SIR, OFFICER RACINE--
--AND GO TO HELL.
RACINE ALWAYS FIGURED IF HE YELLED LOUD ENOUGH EVERYONE ELSE WOULD FALL INTO LINE.
YOU--
YOU WANT TO GIVE THE STATION? GO FOR IT.
I'M OFFICIALLY RESIGNING FROM THIS OUTFIT.
I THOUGHT WE WAS GOING HOME.

THE CORPORATION DOUBLE-HULLED THE COMMUNICATIONS CENTER TO MAKE SURE IT WOULD SURVIVE A CATACLYSMIC "EVENT." THIS QUALIFIED.
DAMN--
I SEALED MYSELF INSIDE WITHOUT THINKING IT THROUGH. THERE WAS ONLY ONE DOOR. NO OTHER EXITS.
OH. NOW YOU WANT TO BE FRIENDS.
UNFORTUNATELY, THERE ARE TWO KINDS OF PEOPLE. THOSE WHO ARE BEHIND THREE INCHES OF STEEL--
--AND THOSE WHO AREN'T.

RAGINE WAS RIGHT ABOUT ONE THING. THOSE THINGS MADE IT TO THE UPPER DECKS WITHIN HOURS.
YOU LET THEM ON BOARD--THEY'RE IN THE DUCTS, THE ACCESS TUBES--
WE HAVE WOMEN AND CHILDREN UP HERE--
YEAH, WELL, THAT'S YOUR PROBLEM.
I WATCHED THEM DISAPPEAR ONE BY ONE, BEGGING, PLEADING, SCREAMING--
THEN THEY WERE GONE.
I WENT TWO DAYS WITHOUT HEARING A HUMAN VOICE. I FOUND SOME WATER IN ONE OF THE EMERGENCY CHESTS, BUT NO FOOD.
I KNEW THE CODES. MAYBE A DISTRESS CALL GOT OUT--MAYBE NOT.
THE CREATURES DIDN'T STRIKE ME AS PARTICULARLY BRIGHT, BUT THEY WERE PERSISTENT. THE COMMUNICATIONS BULKHEAD WOULD GIVE, SOONER OR LATER.
H2O

THUNK
HUH?
I HEARD YOU BEFORE I COULD SEE YOU.
WE'VE GOT ROACHES ON EVERY DECK!
TAKE 'EM DOWN! TAKE 'EM DOWN!
YOU GUYS WERE GOOD! TWO HOURS AND THE ENTIRE STATION WAS CLEAR.
TOO BAD ABOUT RACINE--BUT MAYBE IT WAS BETTER THAT WAY.

FUNNY, WHILE--WHILE I WAS ALONE, I HAD A CHANCE TO THINK ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED!
FOR US WE CAN TELL. YOU'RE THE ONLY SURVIVOR.
WE MUST HAVE DUSTED THE STATIONS MEMORY DURING THE ASSAULT. SAY IDEA HOW THE THINGS GOT ABOARD?
I MEAN, RACINE HAD A FAMILY. THEY WOULD NEED HIS LINE-OF-DUTY DEATH COMPENSATION TO MAKE IT NOW THAT HE WAS--GONE.
--I TRIED TO STOP HIM--
GOD, I TRIED--
IT WAS FIRST OFFICER RACINE. HE OPENED THE AIRLOCK--LET THEM INTO THE STATION--
I ONLY HOPE THE CORPORATION FINDS IT IN THEIR HEART TO PAY, EVEN AFTER THE TRUTH COMES OUT.
IT'S NOT GOING TO BE EASY PUTTING THIS BEHIND ME, BUT I HAVE TO TRY.
SOME GOOD HAS TO COME OUT OF THIS--RIGHT?